

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated January 4, 2005. Claims 1, 4, 10, and 12 are presented for examination. Claims 3, 5-7, 9, 11, and 13 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. Claims 1, 10, and 12, the independent claims, have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicant regards as his invention. Favorable reconsideration is requested. The canceled claims will not be further addressed herein.

Applicants note with appreciation the indication that Claims 3, 6, and 9 would be allowable if rewritten so as not to depend from a rejected claim, and with no change in scope. Claim 1, the base claim of Claim 3, has been rewritten to include the recitation of allowable Claim 3. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claim 1 is now in condition for allowance. Independent Claims 10 and 12 are method and storage medium claims respectively corresponding to apparatus Claim 1, and have been similarly amended. Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claims 10 and 12 are also in condition for allowance.

Claims 1, 4, 10, and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,144,458 (*McLachlan et al.*).

For the reasons discussed above, Applicant submits that independent Claims 1, 10, and 12 are in condition for allowance.

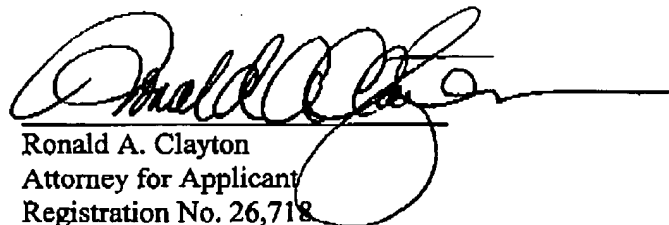
The remaining claim in this application, Claim 4, depends from independent Claim 1 discussed above, and, therefore, is submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons. Since Claim 4 is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, individual reconsideration of the patentability of this claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

This Amendment After Final Action is believed clearly to place this application in condition for allowance and, therefore, its entry is believed proper under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116. Accordingly, entry of this Amendment After Final Action, as an earnest effort to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues, is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe that issues remain outstanding, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact Applicant's undersigned attorney in an effort to resolve such issues and advance the case to issue.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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